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Vale Colin Dobson, 19 July 1937-22 June 2007

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Jones, Malcolm K. and Overstreet, Robin M., "Vale Colin Dobson, 19 July 1937-22 June 2007" (2007).
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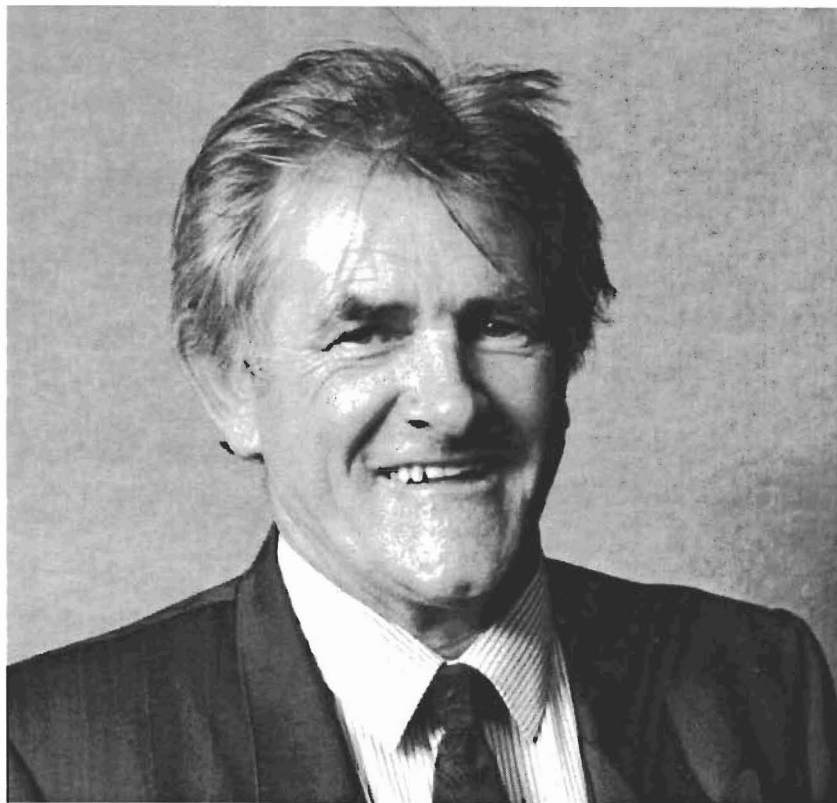
Vale Colin Dobson

19 July 1937 -22 June 2007

Colin Dobson passed away in Brisbane on 22 June 2007 after a struggle with cancer. Colin contributed much to the development of the Society and parasitology in this country. He was Professor and Head of the Department of Parasitology for many years. To him, life was fun and full of laughs; Colin was immensely proud of his department, its heritage, and its members, including the "girls", who made it function. Nevertheless, he had to carefully manoeuvre the department like a well-oiled machine to get the most from its components.

Colin was born at Newbiggin-by-the-Sea on 19 July 1937, the only child of his coalmining parents. Colin was a precocious child. After completing school, he enrolled in Science at Sheffield University, largely because that university had produced two Nobel prize winners- Lord Florey (Nobel prize winner in 1945) and Sir Hans Krebs (1953). Unfortunately, both laureates had retired by the time he arrived at the university, but Colin persevered with his studies and graduated with Honours in Science in 1958. He was awarded his Ph.D. in 1960 for a thesis entitled "An investigation of the host-parasite relations and host specificity of *Nematospiroides dubius*, Baylis 1926, Heligmosomidae, a mouse nematode in its normal and an abnormal host". The interactions between this parasite and its hosts were to occupy Colin's interests for much of his career in research.

Colin arrived in Brisbane in 1960 with his wife Barbara. He was appointed as a Senior Research Fellow in Experimental Parasitology at the University of Queensland and quickly progressed into an academic post. Colin was awarded his D. Sc. from the University of Queensland at the age of 31. He was appointed Professor of parasitology in 1985 and



made head of the Department of Parasitology, a position he held until 1998. His last University of Queensland appointment was as Foundation Director of the School of Marine Science.

Professor Dobson made substantial contributions to knowledge of immunity to parasitic infections, including the nature of protective immunity against gastrointestinal nematodes, genetic control of immunity and immunosuppression. In later years he turned his attention to practical control of metazoan parasites by vaccination. He published in excess of 100 papers, gave many invited presentations, and spent hours on the manuscripts of students in his department. He mentored many young scientists, some of whom, like Mike Rickard, John Welch and Paul Brindley, went on to leadership roles in parasitology. Colin took up his first sabbatical studies in the laboratory of the noted veterinary parasitologist Lawson Soulsby (now Lord Soulsby of Swaffham Prior) at the University of Pennsylvania, and the two formed a firm and lasting friendship.

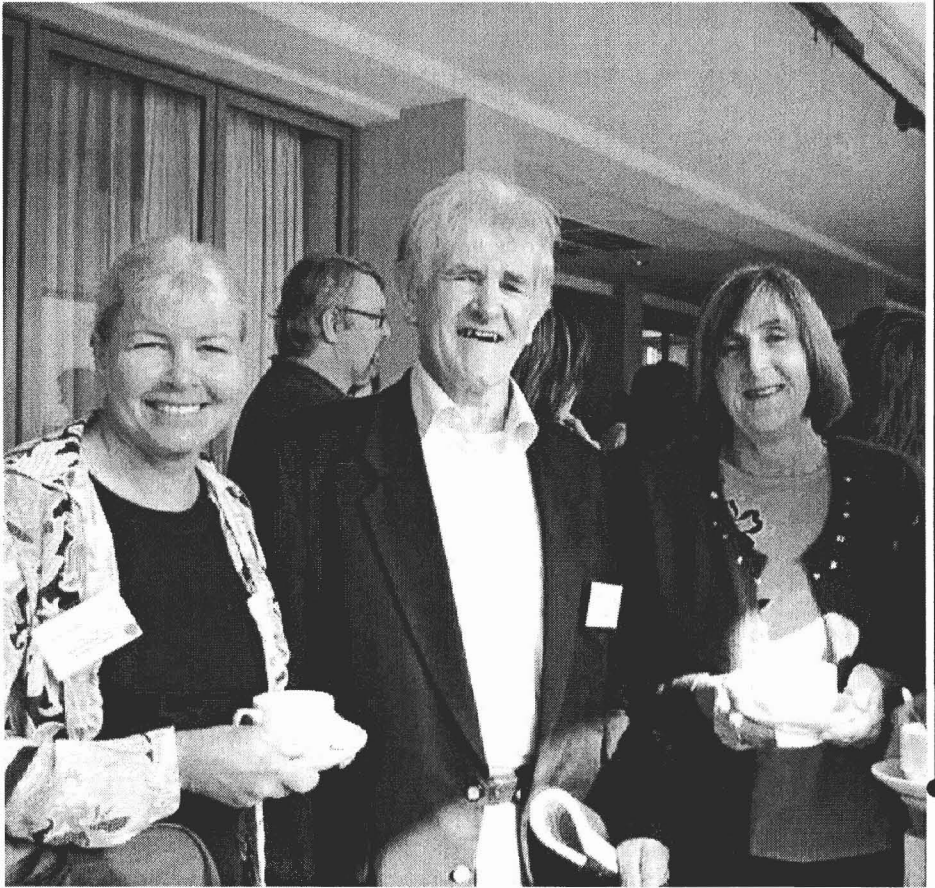
Colin was a foundation member of the ASP and the British Society for Parasitology. He served as President of the Australian Society from 1983 to 1985, during which time much of the Society activity was directed towards organizing ICOPA VI. He was later to be appointed to Chair of the Organizing Committee and contributed much to what was to become a tremendously successful Congress.

Colin's talents extended beyond his science. He was an accomplished artist and painter, and once made a harpsichord. As a superior metal craftsman and competitive marksman, he recognized that he was considered an eccentric among both peer groups. He had a passion for firearms, and turned out his handmade pistols and ammunition as well as a model steam engine and other railroad cars in his shed. Some of his neighbours were not a little concerned when he constructed a shooting range in his backyard at Pinjarra Hills!

Colin was bright, forceful and could carry an argument. He loved books and most rooms of his home contained shelves of his extensive library. Colin was forthright, and many colleagues and former students



will no doubt recall uncomfortable times when Colin was wont to point out home truths. Nevertheless, he was a loyal and true friend to many, and fiercely protective of his own family and extended "family" of parasitologists. He won few friends, but no doubt much respect, among senior administrators at the University for defending HIS department. Sadly Colin's retirement was short and troubled as both he and Barbara battled illness. His beloved wife, Barbara, passed away in late 2006. Colin is survived by his three children, Penny, Kate and Nick and their families; he was extremely appreciative of the achievements and abilities of his children, and each of his grandchildren was the apple of his doting eye. Colin was a wonderful travel companion with a wealth of knowledge on a variety of topics. Actually, he knew more about the US Civil War than most American scholars. He gave much to parasitology in Australia and will be sorely missed!



Malcolm Jones and Robin Overstreet

Above: Colin at ASP 2006, Gold Coast, with Lois Small and Lesley Warner.



Closing Dates for Nominations for ASP Awards

JFA Sprent Prize – September 30th 2007 (for award in 2008).

Bancroft-Mackerras Award - September 30th 2007 (for award in 2008).

Invited Lectureships Travel Grants - December 31st 2007.

JD Smyth Travel Awards - December 31st 2007.

ASP Fellowships - before next mid term Council meeting (February 2008)

